

# *President Correa Outlines Vision for New Latin America*

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San José, January 30 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa outlined the progressive policies the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) will pursue in the coming year under his leadership during an address Thursday in which he accepted the pro tempore presidency of the regional bloc.

"We have to advance and develop much faster," said Correa, before detailing the five areas that CELAC will work on.

First, Correa reiterated his commitment to eradicating poverty and inequality.

Second, the bloc would target education, "the most important step toward development." He noted that at present, Latin America had none of the world's top universities, but aimed to have 12 in the future.

Science, technology and innovation were on the list, followed by the environment. "We must raise our voices against the catastrophe of climate change," Correa told the CELAC delegates.

Finally, the bloc must provide funding for infrastructure, for which investment increased 6.2 percent last year.

Correa criticized the vulture funds which have threatened the economy and sovereignty of Argentina, and suggested that in the future, the BRICS countries - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – could provide alternative financing routes.

“CELAC should propel a new financial architecture,” he said.

The Ecuadorean president confirmed the bloc's “rejection of the aggression and economic war against Venezuela,” and offered its support to Colombia “in its search for peace.”

Ecuador takes over the CELAC presidency from Costa Rica.

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